



# SUGAR LAND'S COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Safe City • Planned Community • Strong Local Economy • Financially Sound City • Mobility for People

*Fall 2001*

## PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN



### WHAT'S INSIDE:

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# ALLEN BOGARD Named Sugar Land City Manager



Allen Bogard has been named Sugar Land's city manager effective Oct. 1, 2001. City Council selected Bogard following the resignation of City Manager David Neeley.

Since his arrival in Sugar Land in 1994 as deputy city manager, Bogard has been instrumental in the development of First Colony Mall and the now-developing Sugar Land Town Square. He also played a leading role in the creation of Sugar Land's two premier recreation facilities – Eldridge and Oyster Creek parks.

Bogard brings a total of 25 years of Texas municipal experience to his new position. He began his career as a budget analyst in Dallas, served as an executive director in Plano and more recently, served as city manager in Winnsboro and in Keller.

## City Property Tax Rate Drops 1.5 Cents

Sugar Land's fiscal year 2001-2002 budget lowers the property tax rate by 1.5 cents, or 4.3 percent, to 33.33 cents. Since 1993, the City has lowered the tax rate 16.67 cents or 33 percent, which has resulted in a tax rate that is one of the lowest tax rates in Texas among cities the size of Sugar Land. Projected 2002 funding sources and expenditures for the \$93.7 million balanced budget include:

Sources		Expenditures	
Sales Tax	\$24.7 million	Public Safety	\$14.6 million
Charges for Service	\$21.4 million	Capital Projects	\$34.7 million
Property Taxes	\$17.4 million	Community Services	\$12 million
Bond Proceeds	\$27.9 million	Debt Service	\$22.8 million
*Other Sources	\$11.9 million	**Other Uses	\$22.5 million

\*Revenues include franchise fees, interest income, fines and forfeitures.

\*\*Other uses include utilities, airport, insurance and administration.

The budget's \$13.5 million or 16.9 percent increase from the prior year's adopted budget is due primarily to infrastructure and rehabilitation projects, with a major emphasis on utility improvements. The Capital Improvements Program for fiscal year 2001-2002 totals \$34.7 million, including funding from the city's two economic development corporations. Most of these funds will be dedicated to the \$18 million Sugar Land Conference Center, to be built in conjunction with the hotel in Town Square, and water and wastewater rehabilitation projects.

In addition, budgets totaling \$12.9 million were approved for the City's two economic development corporations.

## Tax Options for Seniors

Sugar Land's tax rate is one of the lowest municipal tax rates in Texas. Sugar Land also offers an over age 65 exemption of \$40,000 and a homestead exemption of \$5,000. After these exemptions, residents over age 65 pay the second lowest tax bills among Texas cities the size of Sugar Land.

For seniors over the age of 65 with payment problems, the City offers two payment options. A quarterly payment plan allows homeowners over the age of 65 to pay City taxes in installments without penalty or interest.

The City's deferment plan allows homeowners over the age of 65 to postpone payments of delinquent residential property taxes for as long as they own or live in their homes. A senior citizen must file a tax deferral affidavit with the appraisal district; if the senior moves, sells the home or passes away, past taxes and interest at a rate of 8 percent per year are due no later than 91 days after the change. For more information, call (281) 275-2750.

### CITY COUNCIL Dean A. Hrbacek Mayor

**James A. Thompson**  
At-Large Position One

**Karyn K. Dean**  
At-Large Position Two

**Donald L. Smithers**  
Mayor Pro-Tem, Single Member District One

**Cyril Hosley**  
Single Member District Two

**J. Brian Gaston**  
Single Member District Three

**David Wallace**  
Single Member District Four

### CITY STAFF Allen Bogard City Manager

**Karen Glynn**  
Director of Community Development

**Claire Manthei**  
Director of Finance/Administration

**Earnest Taylor**  
Police Chief

**John Wu**  
Fire Chief

**Joe Morris**  
City Attorney

**Glenda Gundermann**  
City Secretary

# SUGAR LAND BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Members of Sugar Land's boards, commissions and corporations give freely of their time and expertise. They are volunteers who make an invaluable civic contribution to the success of Sugar Land, ensuring that residents enjoy a wide range of services and amenities.

## **AVIATION POLICY ADVISORY BOARD**

Henry Neal, chairman  
John Adkins  
Reagan Clark  
Ken English  
Jeng Liang  
Dinesh Shah  
Sally Sims  
Councilman James A. Thompson

## **ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY BOARD**

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Dr. James L. Cox  
Becky Engbrock  
Kathi Lund

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Russell Bird  
Sandra Boughal  
Stephen Caldwell  
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Susan Zapalac

## **MUNICIPAL AIRPORT JOINT ZONING BOARD**

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Robert Lin  
Steve Porter  
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Mable Austin

Suehing Woo Yee Chiang  
John Ivy  
Councilman Brian Gaston  
Tom Gargiulo  
Mike Gibson  
Mike O'Connell

## **PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

Joe Zimmerman, chairman  
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Jesse DeLaRosa  
Kathy Huebner  
Jim Lord  
Andre McDonald  
Rawley Outlaw  
Nancy Porter  
W. Michael Yentzen

## **SUGAR LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Lewis Luckenbach, III, president  
Dean Carpenter  
Councilman Brian Gaston  
Councilman Donald Smithers  
Tim Stubenrouch

## **SUGAR LAND 4B CORPORATION**

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Thomas DeMont  
Paula Stansell  
George Turner  
Councilman David Wallace  
Daniel Wong  
Bridget R. Yeung

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Sally Hirschheim

Deloise Holmes, Jr.  
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Leo Meerman  
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Paul Barnett  
Steve Bowers  
Roxie Campbell  
Doug Ehrenkranz  
R. Kay Parker  
Nancy Porter  
Gil Saenz

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Vincent DiCosimo  
John Gamble  
Louis Garvin  
Jared Jameson  
David E. Neeley  
Greg Stirman  
Robert Treacy

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

Joe Zimmerman, chairman  
Thomas Chapman  
Stephen Ewbank  
Kathy Huebner  
Walter Holmes  
Andre McDonald  
Ray Nixon  
Narendra Patel  
Mary Von Tungeln



# TxDOT and FAA Partner with Sugar Land Airport for Air Traffic Control Tower



► **Cab group photo:** (L-R) Michael Wheeler, tower hub manager for Federal Aviation Administration/Houston; Steven J. Brown, deputy associate administrator for Federal Aviation Administration Air Traffic Services; U.S. Congressman Tom DeLay; State Representative Charlie Howard; Sugar Land Mayor Dean Hrbacek; Sugar Land Councilman Jimmy Thompson, At-Large Position 1; and Dave Fulton, Director of Aviation of Texas Department of Transportation Aviation Division.

The last man to walk on the moon, Gene Cernan, was the first pilot to officially touch down on Sugar Land's runway under direction from controllers in the new state-of-the-art air traffic control tower. Other activities at the August dedication included an F-16 flyby, music by the Ismaili Pipe Band and a ribbon cutting that included U.S. Congressman Tom DeLay.

Sugar Land Airport was the first airport in the state to receive funding from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for construction of an air traffic control tower. TxDOT approved \$500,000 toward the construction, with the remaining \$500,000 paid through a loan from Sugar Land Development Corporation, a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to support economic development. The airport will repay these funds through revenues from fuel sales.

As part of the Contracts Tower Program, the Federal Aviation Administration is funding tower operations, saving the airport more than \$250,000 annually.

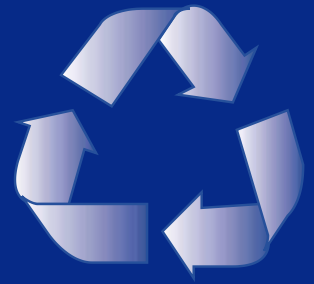


## Corporations Choose Sugar Land Airport

Sugar Land Airport is quickly becoming the southwest sector's hub for corporate aviation. Parker Drilling, Sugar Land Airport's newest tenant, recently entered an agreement to lease hangar and office space. The company provides worldwide drilling and rental tool services to the energy industry.

Parker joins a growing list of companies at Sugar Land Airport, including:

- Western Airways, one of the largest aircraft charter and management services in the greater-Houston area (Western consolidated its operations and more than 20 aircraft to the airport last year and recently announced expansion plans.); and
- Beeler Properties Inc., a company that manages and builds apartment communities and develops real estate (Beeler recently purchased the BFI hangar and relocated its flight operations to the airport.).



## Texas Recycles Day

Texans will learn just how recycling relates to clean air by attending one of 500 Texas Recycles Day events on Nov. 15. From Sugar Land to Midland, Abilene to Athens, recycling events will focus on the theme, "Care for the Air ... Recycle."

Locally, Sugar Land and Keep Sugar Land Beautiful will provide literature and goodies promoting clean air to Fort Bend ISD fourth-graders. The literature will focus on the air quality benefits of recycling, including cutting carbon emissions, reducing energy consumption and allowing new products to be made with less pollution. Whether recycling, conserving energy or choosing to car pool, each is a positive step toward clean air in Texas.

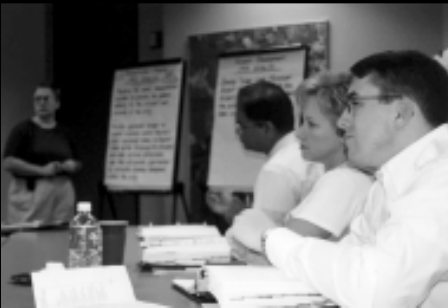
More information on the event is available at [www.TexasRecyclesDay.org](http://www.TexasRecyclesDay.org).



## Steer It... Clear It

The law now allows that vehicles involved in accidents should be removed from the roadway if there are no injuries and the vehicles are able to be driven.

# A Bright Future



Ensuring that residents continue to enjoy a quality of life unsurpassed in Texas is the goal of Sugar Land's seven-member Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (names appear on page 3). Appointed by City Council in July, these citizens will meet weekly during the next eight months to develop goals, objectives and strategies for updating the City's *Comprehensive Plan*, a document adopted in 1993.

Shaping the work of the steering committee is feedback from a community summit held this spring, during which 88 community leaders provided input on a vision for the City during the next 20 years. They prioritized what they perceived to be vital issues the City will face.

For more information, call (281) 275-2313 or e-mail [lmcelhanon@cityhall.ci.sugar-land.tx.us](mailto:lmcelhanon@cityhall.ci.sugar-land.tx.us).

## Growing Some Justice

There's no free ride for juveniles issued citations in Sugar Land. They can now be put to work instead of paying fines.

As one of two Texas cities participating in the Community Garden program, juveniles issued Class C misdemeanors may be assigned to work in a garden located at the City's Public Works complex. Youth cultivate crops, including tomatoes, squash, cabbage, herbs, strawberries, radishes, carrots, etc. More than 176 pounds of food has been donated to the East Fort Bend Human Need Ministry Food Pantry since October 2000. Keep Sugar Land Beautiful recently recognized the garden with its Who Keeps Sugar Land Beautiful Award.

Volunteers help to supervise the youth while working the garden. To volunteer, call (281) 275-2560.

## A Driving Force



Ever wonder how that police patrol vehicle or fire truck is always able to respond when needed? Let's not forget the Public Works water unit dispatched to repair a water main leak or the bucket

truck sent to repair a malfunctioning signal light at a busy intersection. Numerous Sugar Land departments rely heavily on specific vehicles, many of them designed with specialized service in mind, to perform their everyday duties.

Fleet Services maintains more than 350 city vehicles and pieces of equipment. A staff of three mechanics, who hold Automotive Service Excellence certification, and one divisional service writer perform and or document service ranging from basic preventive maintenance items to full-scale repairs or replacements, including engines and transmissions.

## DID YOU KNOW?

In Fort Bend County, shoppers have some 4 million square feet of retail space close to home, 3 million square feet of it in Sugar Land alone. First Colony Mall makes up 1 million of that square footage.



## Sugar Land Acquires Emergency Response Vehicle

The Sugar Land Fire Department recently placed a new emergency response vehicle in service for non-fire-related calls. The purpose of the vehicle is to reduce the number of runs made by the much larger and costlier full-size fire engines.

Located at Sugar Land Fire Station #4 (Austin Parkway near First Colony Mall), data indicates the vehicle has successfully reduced response times for all types of emergencies around First Colony Mall, including the following:

- emergency medical calls;
- motor vehicle accidents;
- non-emergency service calls; and
- hazardous materials spills.



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### Free Gun Locks, Safety Kits Available

Free gun lock and safety kits are now available at the Sugar Land Police Department, 1200 Highway 6.

The police department received about 2,500 gunlock safety kits as part of Texas' Project ChildSafe. The kits will be available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday on a first-come, first-serve basis with a limit of two per household.

For more information about the free gunlock and safety kits, please contact Sgt. Angie Womble at (281) 275-2520.

## Sugar Land Firefighter Selected for New York Search and Rescue Effort

Sugar Land Fire Lt. Greg Hopper recently returned from a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) deployment to New York, where he assisted in the response to the destruction of the World Trade Towers.

The only Fort Bend County firefighter to assist in the search and rescue effort, Hopper has been dispatched to emergencies in the past as part of FEMA's Texas Task Force 1, White Team. In this capacity, Hopper participates in search and rescue operations, medical treatment and technical support. Designed to be logistically self-sufficient for the first 72 hours of operation, the task force is able to function for up to 10 days.

## FIFTH FIRE STATION ADDED

Sugar Land's first new fire station since 1994 and the first ever built in the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction opened Aug. 29. Fire Station #5 is located at Commonwealth Boulevard and Elkins Road.

Fire Station #5 is staffed 24 hours per day and houses a Rescue "Pumper" Engine capable of responding to fires, medical emergencies and automobile collisions. The location of the station should significantly improve response times within First Colony, Commonwealth and Avalon, as well as areas throughout the southwest portion of the City. Firefighters based at Station #5 have responded to approximately 30 emergencies during the station's first month of operations, placing the facility on-track to meet projections of more than 300 emergency calls during its first year.





## U.S. 59: Two Years Down, One to Go



With the second year of road construction behind us in Sugar Land, the U.S. Highway 59 expansion project is well underway, and the end is in sight. We're headed for the goal of summer 2002, when drivers will enjoy a total of eight continuous northbound and southbound main lanes from State Highway 6 to southwest Houston.

### On the Horizon

- Thanksgiving 2001: Traffic switched to new pavement in the median for the U.S. 59 main lanes
- Early 2002: Reconstruction of State Highway 6 at U.S. 59 completed
- 2002: U.S. 59 main lanes over U.S. Highway 90A completed
- 2002: U.S. 59 main lanes and frontage roads from Sugar Creek Boulevard to Highway 6 completed
- 2003: Frontage roads between Kirkwood Drive and Sugar Creek Boulevard, including U.S. 90A main lanes and the railroad crossing completed

## Keeping Motorists Mobile

Sugar Land implemented several proactive measures to keep motorists on the move:

- New developments must dedicate additional right-of-way at major intersections, accommodating exclusive right-turn lanes.
- New commercial development must construct left-turn lanes at mid-block median openings to serve their private driveways.
- Joint use commercial driveways are utilized wherever possible to minimize the number of commercial driveways on public streets.
- The Traffic Management Center will ultimately remotely control traffic signals.
- A policy is being drafted to minimize the impact that new development has on public streets.
- Capital improvement projects recently completed or in the planning stages:
  - 1) Right- and left-turn lanes at Dulles and Lexington completed;
  - 2) Right-turn lane on Dulles at Highway 6 completed;
  - 3) Right-turn lane on Lexington at Highway 6 completed;
  - 4) Re-striping Sweetwater Boulevard/First Colony overpass at Highway 59 to four lanes by Thanksgiving 2001;
  - 5) Right-turn lane on Sweetwater at Lexington to begin next year;
  - 6) Median improvements to Lexington between Austin Parkway and Highway 6 to be constructed next year.

## And the Survey Says ...

As part of Sugar Land's summer 2001 community newsletter, residents were asked to complete a communications survey designed to solicit feedback on items like the City's community newsletter, the annual report/calendar and the Web site. More than 390 surveys were returned; the following comments summarize what residents had to say:

- With few exceptions, respondents said the community newsletter is one of the ways they receive information about the City, saying they read it "always" or "often." Local events and ordinance stories were cited as most popular, and a new section on new Sugar Land businesses was requested most often.
- Comments on the annual report/calendar ran the gamut from a "waste of taxpayer dollars" to pride in living in Sugar Land. Based on the feedback, the calendar will continue for now, and the 2002 calendar will have date pages that are pen and pencil friendly and will include some Fort Bend ISD dates.
- The majority of individuals who returned a survey indicated they have "never" visited the City's Web site. Check out our site at [www.ci.sugar-land.tx.us](http://www.ci.sugar-land.tx.us).
- Most respondents were unaware that they can direct inquiries, complaints, compliments and requests to Ask City for assistance and resolution. The Ask City phone number is **281/ ASK-CITY (275-2489)**.
- The **U.S. 59 Hotline (281/276-9959)** — also unfamiliar to most people who returned surveys — provides information regarding road closures.

## Hometown Help

A Utility Assistance Program is available to customers experiencing difficulties in paying their bills. The program is supported with donations from water/wastewater customers and administered by the Fort Bend Social Services Department.

Eligibility for the Utility Assistance Program includes unemployment; persons 65 years of age or older on fixed incomes with no alternative source of funds; disability; single parent household; and special hardships, such as unusual expenses that can be documented.

## On the Cover: Proud to be an American

Thousands of Sugar Land residents from all backgrounds — including Moslems, Hindus, Jews and Christians — joined together at Oyster Creek Park to rally around the flag during “Proud to be an American.” Patriotic songs and chants of “USA!” filled the air as residents sent a symbolic message during a time of national tragedy: “We are one in Sugar Land.”

Joining in the festivities were U.S. Congressman Tom DeLay, Sugar Land City Council and many other local and state officials. Minerva Perez, of KTRK-TV Channel 13, served as master of ceremonies, and religious leaders spoke on the need for unity: Sr. Pastor Tom Pace, of the Christ United Methodist Church of Sugar Land; Reverend Ed Lee, pastor of the Fort Bend Community Church; Aftab Ghesani, a representative of the Moslem community; Bharat Dave, of the Hindu BLPS Temple; and Rabbi Avi Schulman, Congregation Beth El.

Appearing before the crowd were Clements High School student Amber Laird who sang the National Anthem; the Ismaili PipeBand; the Kelly McGuire Band; Friends in Harmony: Deborah Hernandez, Laurie Pauley, Marlene Keplinger and Theresa Rawls; and Sugar Land firefighter Robert Rogers, who played a bagpipe tribute to fallen firefighters.

The Sugar Land and the Fort Bend Exchange Clubs and the Austin High School Reserve Officer Training Corps color guard also participated in the event.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### November

- 6 City Council Meeting
- 6 Election Day
- 10 Backyard Composting Classes
- 15 Texas Recycles Day
- 20 City Council Meeting
- 22 Thanksgiving Day-City Offices Closed
- 23 City Offices Closed
- 27 City Council Meeting

### December

- 4 City Council Meeting
- 13 Senior Holiday Gala
- 14 Share Your Christmas Food Drive
- 18 City Council Meeting
- 25 Christmas-City Offices Closed
- 29 Curbside Christmas Tree Recycling

### ROLLING HOLIDAYS

*Thanksgiving* (Thursday, November 22)

Thursday's solid waste collection will occur on Friday, and Friday's collection will occur on Saturday.

*Christmas* (Tuesday, December 25)

Tuesday's solid waste collection will occur on Wednesday; Thursday and Friday's collection will not be affected.

*New Year's Day* (Tuesday, January 1)

Tuesday's solid waste collection will occur on Wednesday; Thursday and Friday's collection will not be affected



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